

A MAKER OF HISTORY

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(Continued from Page Three.)

ambassador, and I have collected all the evidence possible. There is absolutely no proof obtainable of the presence of any Japanese craft among the English fishing fleet. I submit therefore that this is a case for arbitration. I consider that up to the present our friends on the other side of the channel have displayed commendable moderation in a time of great excitement, and I am happy to say that I have the authority of Lord Fisher himself for saying that they will consent to submitting the affair to a commission of arbitration."

The president's words were received with chilling silence. It was the prince, who, after a short time, replied:

"Arbitration," he said coldly, "does not commend itself to us. We have been insulted. Our country and our gallant fleet have been held up to ridicule throughout the whole English press. We are tired of being dictated to and bullied by a weaker power—the openly declared ally of our enemy. England has long been seeking for a 'casus belli' with us. At last she has found it."

M. Grisson whispered for a moment to one of his colleagues. Then he turned once more to the prince.

"Let us understand one another, M. le Prince," he said, "and you, Count von Munchen! You have come to announce to me your intention to jointly make war upon England. St. Petersburg is to refuse her demands, England will naturally strike at the Baltic fleet, and Germany will send her fleet to the rescue and at the same time land troops somewhere in the north of England. Russia, I presume, will withdraw her troops from Manchuria and strike at India."

"No, no," Count von Munchen protested. "I can assure you, monsieur, it is not our intention to land a single German soldier in England. We are interested only to see fair play to Russia. We require that the Baltic fleet shall be allowed to go on its way without molestation."

The president faced the last speaker. His gray, bushy eyebrows almost met in a frown.

"Then what, count," he asked, "is the meaning of the mobilization of 200,000 men at Kiel? What is the meaning of your state railroads running west being closed last night to all public traffic? Why have you cabled huge orders for government supplies? Why were you running trains all last night to the coast? Do you suppose that our secret service slumbers—that we are a nation of babies?"

The count made an effort to retain his composure.

"M. le President," he said, "the reports which have reached you have been much exaggerated. It is necessary for us to back up our protests to England by a show of force."

M. Grisson smiled.

"Enough of this, gentlemen," he said. "We will now talk to one another as men who have weighty affairs to deal with simply and directly. The story of the meeting between your two rulers, which you, Prince Korndoff, have alluded to as a fairy tale, was a perfectly true one. I have known of that meeting some time, and I have certain proof of what transpired at it. The North sea incident was no chance affair. It was a deliberately and skillfully arranged 'casus belli,' although your admiral, Prince Korndoff, had to go 100 miles out of his way to find the Dogger bank fishing fleet. You spoke to me last night of Cherbourg, prince. I think that, after all, your secret service is scarcely so successful as mine, for I can assure you that you will find there all that is to be found today at Kiel."

The prince was amazed.

"But, M. le President," he exclaimed, "you cannot mean—our ally!"

The president extended a forefinger. "It was no part of our alliance," he said sternly, "that you should make a secret treaty with another power and keep hidden from us no less a scheme than the invasion of England. My cabinet have dealt with this matter on its own merits. I have the honor to tell you, gentlemen, that I have concluded an alliance with England to come into effect in the case of your carrying out your present intention. For every army corps you succeed in landing in England I, too, shall land one, only, I think, with less difficulty, and for every German ship which bears for action in the North sea two French ones will be prepared to meet her."

Prince Korndoff rose to his feet.

"I think, M. le President," he said stiffly, "that this discussion had better be postponed until after I have had an opportunity of communicating with my imperial master. I must confess, sir, that your attitude is a complete surprise to me."

"As you will, sir," the president answered. "I am perhaps more a man of affairs than a diplomatist, and I have spoken to you with less reserve than is altogether customary. But I shall never believe that diplomacy which chooses the dark and tortuous ways of intrigue and misrepresentation is best calculated to uphold and strengthen the destinies of a great nation. I wish you good morning, gentlemen!"

For forty-eight hours the war fever raged and the pendulum swung backward and forward. The cables between Berlin and St. Petersburg were never idle. There was a rumor among those behind the scenes of an enormous bribe offered to France in return for her neutrality alone. Its instant and scornful refusal practically brought the crisis to an end. The German hosts melted away, and the Baltic fleet passed on. St. Petersburg accepted the

British demands, and a commission of arbitration was appointed.

Henri de Bergillac read out the news from the morning paper and yawned.

"C'est fini—l'affaire Poynton," he remarked. "You can get ready as soon as you like, Guy. I am going to take you into Paris to your sister."

Guy looked up eagerly.

"My pardon?" he asked.

The vicomte made a wry face.

"Heavens," he exclaimed, "I forgot that there were still explanations to make! Fill your abominable pipe, mon ami, and think that tomorrow or the next day you may be in your beloved England. Think how well we have guarded you here when a dozen men were loose in Paris who would have killed you on sight. Remember that in the underground history of England



"C'est fini—l'affaire Poynton," he remarked.

you will be known always as the man who saved his country. I shouldn't wonder in the least if you weren't decorated when you get home. Think of all these things—hard!"

"All right," Guy answered. "Go ahead."

"You never killed any one. The duel was a fake. You were—not exactly sober. That was entirely our fault, and we had to invent some plan to induce you to come into hiding peacefully. Voilà tout! It is forgiven?"

Guy laughed a great laugh of relief. "Rather!" he exclaimed. "What an ass I must have seemed, asking that old Johnny for a pardon!"

The vicomte smiled. "The old Johnny, Guy, was the president of France. He wanted to know afterward what the devil you meant."

Guy rose to his feet. "If you tell me anything else," he said, "I shall want to punch your head."

The vicomte laughed. "Come," he said. "I will return you to your adorable sister."

CHAPTER XXXIX.

M. ALBERT was not often surprised, and still less often did he show it. The party, however, who trooped cheerily into his little restaurant at something after midnight on this particular morning succeeded in placing him at a disadvantage.

First there was the Vicomte de Bergillac, one of his most important and influential patrons for many reasons and whose presence alone was more than sufficient guarantee for whom-ever might follow. Then there was the Marquis de St. Ethel, one of the "haute noblesse," to welcome whom was a surpassing honor.

And then M. Guy Poynton, the young English gentleman, whose single appearance here a few weeks back had started all the undercurrents of political intrigue and who for the justification of French journalism should at

that moment have been slowly drying at the morgue.

And with him the beautiful young English lady who had come there in search of him and who, as she had left the place in the small hours of the morning with M. Louis, should certainly not now have reappeared as charming and as brilliant as ever, her eyes soft with happiness and her laugh making music more wonderful than the violins of his little orchestra.

And following her the broad shouldered young Englishman, Sir George Duncombe, who had once entertained a very dangerous little party in his private room upstairs and against whom the dictum had gone forth.

And following him the Englishman with the heavy glasses, whom "Faire Poynton" had also brought before to his cafe and with whom mademoiselle from Austria had talked long and earnestly.

And lastly M. Spencer, the English journalist, also with a black cross after his name, but seemingly altogether unconscious of it.

M. Albert was not altogether at his best. Such a mixture of sheep and goats confused him. It was the vicomte who, together with the head waiter, arranged a redistribution of tables so that the whole party could sit together. It was the vicomte who constituted himself host. He summoned M. Albert to him.

"Albert," he said, with a little wave of the hand, "these ladies and gentlemen are my friends. To quote the words of my charming young companion here, M. Guy Poynton, whom you may possibly remember"—M. Albert bowed—"we are on the bust! I do not know the precise significance of

the phrase any more than I suppose you do, but it means among other things a desire for the best you have to eat and to drink. Bring Pommery '92, Albert, and send word to your chef that we desire to eat without being hungry!"

M. Albert hurried away, glad of the opportunity to escape. Guy leaned back in his chair and looked around with interest.

"Same old place," he remarked, "and, by Jove, there's the young lady from Austria!"

The young lady from Austria paid her bill and departed somewhat hastily. The vicomte smiled.

"I think we shall frighten a few of them away tonight," he remarked. "The wine! Good! We shall need magnams to drown our regrets if, indeed, our English friends desert us tomorrow. M. Guy Poynton, unconscious maker of history and savior of your country, I congratulate you upon your whole skin, and I drink your health!"

Guy drank and, laughing, refilled his glass.

"And to you, the best of amateur conspirators and most charming of hosts!" he said. "Come soon to England and bring your automobile, and we will conspire against you with a policeman and a stop watch."

The vicomte sighed and glanced toward Phyllis.

"Under happier circumstances," he murmured, and then, catching the marquis's eye, he was silent.

The band played English music, and the chef sent them up a wonderful omelet. Mile. Ermeline from the Folie Bergeres danced in the small space between the tables, and the vicomte, buying a cluster of pink roses from the flower girl, sent them across to her with a diamond pin in the ribbon.

The marquis rebuked him half seriously, but he only laughed. "Tonight," he said, "is the end of a great adventure. We amateurs have justified our existence. Tonight I give away all that I choose. Ah, Angele!" he murmured in her dainty little ear, "if I had but a heart to smile!"

She flashed a quick smile into his face, but her forehead was wrinkled.

"You have lost it to the young English miss. She is beautiful, but so cold!"

"Do you think so?" he whispered. "Look!"

Phyllis was seated next Duncombe, and he, too, was whispering something in her ear. The look with which she answered him told all that there was to know. The marquis, who had intercepted it, shrugged her shoulders. "It is not worth while, my friend, that you break your heart," she murmured, "for that one can see in an affair arranged."

He nodded.

"After all," he said, "the true Frenchman loves only in his own country."

"Or in any other where he may chance to be," she answered dryly. "Never mind, Henri! I shall not let you wander very far. Your supper party has been delightful—but you see the time!"

They trooped down the narrow stairs, laughing and talking. Duncombe and Phyllis came last, and their hands met for an instant behind the bury commissionaire.

"Until tomorrow,"

"Until tomorrow," she echoed softly as he handed her into the electric coupe.

Andrew and he drove down the hill together. Duncombe was a little ill at ease.

"There is one thing, Andrew," he said, "which I should like to say to you. I want you to remember the

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night in your garden when you asked me to come to Paris for you."

"Yes?"

"I warned you, didn't I? I knew that it would come, and it has!"

Andrew smiled in gentle scorn.

"My dear Duncombe," he said, "why do you think it necessary to tell me a thing so glaringly apparent? I have nothing to blame you for. It was a foolish dream of mine, which I shall easily outlive, for, George, this has been a great day for me. I believe that my time for dreams has gone by."

Duncombe turned toward him with interest.

"What do you mean, Andrew?"

"I have been to see Foudroye, the great oculist. He has examined my eyes carefully, and he assures me positively that my eyesight is completely sound. In two months' time I shall see as well as any one!"

Duncombe's voice shook with emotion. He grasped his friend's hand.

"That is good—magnificent—Andrew!" he declared.

Their carriage rattled over the cobblestones as they crossed the square. The white, mysterious dawn was breaking over Paris. Andrew threw his head back with a little laugh.

"Back into the world, George, where dreams are only the cobwebs of time and a man's work grows beneath his hands like a living statue to the immortals. I feel my hands upon it and the great winds blowing. Thank God!"

THE END.

Fun In Space.

I dreamed last night that I was present at a committee meeting of the sun, earth, moon and stars.

"I'm no coward," said the earth.

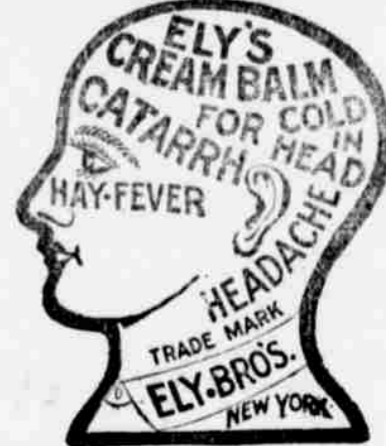
"No, but you have two great fears," said the sun hotly.

"And those are?"

"The hemispheres."

"You've forgotten the atmosphere," put in the moon. And the comet, who had no business to be there, wagged his tail with joy.

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